



OESNEWS

Governor's Office of Emergency Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Greg Renick (562) 577-8503

**State Emergency Director Urges Californians To
Follow Safety Precautions As Cold Weather Continues**

SACRAMENTO – The Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), Henry Renteria, today urged Californians to continue the safety actions they've been taking to keep themselves, family members, neighbors and pets safe from the effects of the extremely cold weather that has hit California this week.

"The National Weather Service indicates that many areas of California will continue to experience very cold temperatures through early next week," said Renteria. "I urge Californians to make their personal safety and that of their family and neighbors their number-one priority."

"Prolonged exposure to extremely cold temperatures can cause significant health problems, including hypothermia and frostbite" said Renteria. "It's important that Californians recognize the symptoms of these conditions."

The OES Director said Californians can reduce their risk of illness by wearing layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing, mittens, a hat and scarf when they go outdoors.

"Young children, seniors and persons with underlying medical conditions are extremely vulnerable," he said. "It's important that family and friends help ensure their safety by monitoring their conditions, making sure they stay warm and have plenty of medicine, food to meet special dietary needs and someone to contact in an emergency."

"Californians can also get through this cold spell by making sure they have ample emergency supplies, including heating fuel, blankets, food and water," Renteria said. He urged the public to monitor their local radio and television stations for weather updates and emergency instruction, check regularly on seniors and persons with disabilities and to take steps to ensure the safety of their pets.

At the direction of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who on Friday proclaimed a state of emergency covering all 58 California counties, OES and other state agencies continue to monitor the weather situation and are working closely with county emergency managers throughout California to make sure the state is prepared to support local agencies immediately if state resources are needed.

As part of its ongoing Homeless Shelter Program, the California National Guard (CNG) has opened armories in Gilroy, Sunnyvale, Santa Cruz, Merced, Sylmar, Ventura, Los Angeles, Culver City, Santa Ana, Fullerton, Glendale, San Rafael, Porterville, Redwood City, Tulare, Escondido, Modesto and Oakdale to serve as warming centers.

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In addition, representatives of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the American Red Cross have prepared and placed fairgrounds in 16 cities on standby to serve as warming centers if needed. The fairgrounds on standby are located in Sacramento, Orland, Stockton, Hanford, Merced, Paso Robles, Turlock, Monterey, Lancaster, Madera, Tulare, Gosford, Red Bluff, Fresno, Tres Pinos and Daly City.

Other actions taken by the state in response to the extremely cold temperatures include:

- The state Department of Health Services (DHS) has contacted local health departments and facilities licensed by DHS to ensure they are aware of the cold weather event and to inform them of protocols to protect the health and safety of vulnerable populations.
- The state Department of Social Services (DSS) has contacted county welfare directors to ensure they are aware of the cold weather event and that In-Home Supportive Service (IHSS) workers are aware of the event, as well as the protocols designed to ensure the health and safety of their clients.

“The safety of Californians remains our utmost concern,” said Renteria. “We will continue to monitor the weather and maintain close contact with local emergency managers, so that we can address any request for assistance immediately.”

More information about emergency preparedness is available on the OES Web site at www.oes.ca.gov.

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